

COMMISSION ON AGING
MEETING SUMMARY MINUTES
November 18, 2010

Members Present	Members Absent
John Honig	Mona Negm
Alan Kreger	Diane Nguyen-Vu
Judith Welles	Harriette Rindner
Judith Levy	
Vivien Hsueh	
Marcia Pruzan	Liaisons
Morton Davis	Austin Heyman-OCP
Myrna Cooperstein	Patricia Lesnick-Vital Living Committee
Tammy Duell	Les Trachtman-Arts Council
Spencer Schron	Linda Berg-Libraries
Paula Post	Pazit Aviv – HOC
Leslie Marks	John Miers – Commission on Persons with Disabilities
J. C. (Jack) Sprague	
Robert Tiller	
Elaine Binder	Guests
Grace Whipple	Rollin Stanley -MNPPC
Beth Shapiro	Irwin Goldbloom
Miriam Kelty	Nginyên Minh Châu (Châu)
Nhora B. Murphy	Sarah Gotbaum-Older Women’s League
	Staff
Members Absent	Odile Saddi
Zoe Lefkowitz	Sharon Briggs
Alicia Bazan-Jimenez	

REPORT FROM THE CHAIR – Elaine Binder

The Chair opened the meeting at 9:00 a.m.

October Minutes

Commission on Aging (COA) members approved the October meeting minutes with the amended correction that Beth Shapiro attended the October meeting. John Honig made the first motion to accept the amended minutes and Jack Sprague seconded the motion.

PRESENTATION by Guest Speaker, Rollin Stanley

The Chair introduced Rollin Stanley, Director of the Montgomery Planning Department, Maryland National Park and Planning Commission since 2008. Recently Mr. Stanley has been involved with planning for the Great Seneca Science Corridor, new construction at White Flint, and the Purple Line. He advocates for growth with a focus on transit-oriented development in urban design. Mr. Stanley shared a PowerPoint presentation and video that can be found at <http://montgomeryplanning.org/blog-director> (“A New Way of Thinking”).

Mr. Rollin emphasized a number of critical points:

- It is anticipated that when the new census data is released next spring, the County will have become a minority/majority community.
- By 2011, only 4% of County land will be left for building traditional single-family, detached homes.
- After housing costs, transportation is the second largest budget item for most households. Commute time in our area is the second longest in the nation (after Atlanta).
- In regard to the infrastructure, the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission estimates that 50% of water lines will have to be replaced by 2045. At this time, there is a water main break every week and one-half. The County cannot afford to replace the existing infrastructure, and the population density is too low to generate the tax dollars needed to pay for it.
- Sixty-three percent of County seniors live in single-family homes today. We can therefore expect a massive turnover in single-family homes in 30 years. There is a critical need to attract younger taxpayers to Montgomery County to fill those homes and help support tax revenues that support needed County services.
- In a 2005-2006 survey of seniors, one-third indicated they would leave the County, one-third said they would stay, and one-third were undecided. The main reasons seniors gave for leaving were economics, traffic congestion, climate, and a desire to live closer to their children. Many seniors reported that they wanted to live in urban areas similar to Bethesda and Silver Spring.
- For the first time in the history of the world, the number of people living in urban location exceeds the number of persons living in the rural location. In the next 30 years, this percentage is expected to double. While our County is well positioned with Metro and many other assets, urgent action is needed to increase housing density in proximity to the subway stations.

In summary, Mr. Stanley believes the County is facing a perfect storm:

- Fewer working-age adults;
- Increasing infrastructure costs;
- Increasing in social services needs;
- More residents with lower income in the community;
- Low-density landscape;
- Growing transportation/mobility challenges;
- Fewer land areas for growth; and
- Affordability/income issues related to living Montgomery County

Available options for meeting these challenges include: develop more mixed-use buildings; replace some of the 8,000 parking lots in the County; develop arterial streets with more compact housing; and enhance transportation options, possibly with use of streetcars. Mr. Rollins noted that there currently are 106 strip malls in the County, but that current zoning regulations prohibit construction of mixed-use buildings on those sites. This is an issue that the County Council will need to address.

COA REPORTS

Treasurer's Report – Vivien Hsueh

There is \$1,550 in the COA account. The COA Holiday Party will be held on December 16th beginning at 10:30 a.m. There will be a short business meeting followed by lunch. Spouses and significant others are invited to attend. Please write checks to the COA.

Brief Announcements

The Nominating Committee will conduct confidential interviews of COA applicants in December. The appointment process can take two to three months.

Les Trachtman is recovering from surgery. A card was circulated for signature during the meeting. Odile Saddi introduced Sharon Briggs, a part time Administrative Assistant from a Temporary Agency, and thanked Sharon and her husband for helping set up the meeting room.

Area Agency on Aging Report- Odile Saddi

- A. Since the ambulance fee was defeated in the November 2 elections, there will be an additional \$14 million budget shortfall; unless the County Council votes differently, the following cuts can be expected.
- DHHS will have a \$100,000 reduction in In-Home Services. In addition, \$500,000 will be eliminated for miscellaneous DHHS contracts and would be passed through to provider organizations.
 - The Recreation Department will be cutting approximately \$114,000 for senior programming; this means the elimination of senior programs in community centers. This would affect 800 seniors currently participating in 11 community centers in the County.
 - \$1 million in cuts will affect maintenance and basic supplies across all County departments, including recreation, community, and senior centers.
 - The Call 'N Ride program budget will be reduced by 50%, with a savings of \$1 million.
 - More than 100 positions in the Fire Department will be eliminated and operation costs reduced, saving \$5.8 million; these cuts will affect services to all, and would affect seniors when in need of Emergency Medical Services.
- B. The State of Maryland Department on Aging is launching a Maryland Access Point (MAP) website for seniors, persons with disabilities, and caregivers, on December 1st. MAP is part of the national Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) initiative of the Administration on Aging and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Operating in 50 states and four territories, it provides streamlined access to information and services for long-term supports and services. The link is www.marylandaccesspoint.info.
- C. The State of Maryland DoA has successfully obtained a federal grant for the development of ADRCs. As a result, the County expects a grant of \$60,000 this year and \$20,000 next year for one-time expenditures. The County is developing its grant budget at this time.
- D. The Recreation Department's "Vision 2030" draft recommendations can be accessed at www.VisionMontgomery2030.org. Feedback and comments are welcome.
- E. Open Enrollment Season for Medicare Part D prescription medication coverage runs until December 31st. Contact Senior Health Insurance Program (SHIP) for assistance at 301-590-2819.

- F. The Montgomery County Coalition on End-of-Life Care (www.mccelc.org) seeks to support a recommendation of the Montgomery County Commission on Aging's (COA) Summer Study on End-of-Life Care. This study was designed to improve end-of-life outcomes in Montgomery County. Emergency Medical protocols for patients at the end of life were considered, including options for withholding resuscitation for compelling reasons even without a formal Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) order. A pilot program to clarify and expand existing protocols was recommended. Recruiting a proposal writer is the first step in this process. The honorarium for this work will range from \$800-\$1000 (generously committed to this project by *Compassion and Choices, National Capital Area*).
- G. The Mental Health pilot project is underway. Staff met with six assisted living providers on November 16th to explain the project and invite interested members to participate. Two training sessions for providers will be held in December.

COA Legislative Breakfast on December 3rd – Jack Sprague

The legislative breakfast will take place at 8 AM on Friday, December 3 at Holiday Park Senior Center.

Jack Sprague distributed three handouts:

- 1) A brochure on last year's legislative session and names for the seven new delegates;
- 2) A handout about the Maryland Assembly website <http://mlis.state.md.us>. Starting with the 2011 General Assembly Session, free, up-to-the-minute service will be available to all users of this website. (A subscription will no longer be required.)
- 3) Speaking point for discussion with legislators. For the 2011 session, both the Majority Leader of the House and the Majority Leader of the Senate are from Montgomery County.

Mr. Sprague noted that Aging in Place, one of the Commission's main concerns, is a serious issue that should also concern all legislators. Of the 114,000 seniors in Montgomery County, if only 1% become destitute and without family, they will turn to the State for assistance. Today's costs are estimated to be over \$70,000 per resident in long term care facilities.

The COA Chair and Odile Saddi will compile background information and send it out to COA members closer to the event. Judy Welles will be the event's photographer. Anyone with personal contact/personal relationship with the Delegates was asked to please coordinate with Jack.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Stakeholders Partners and Aging in Place – Beth Shapiro and Grace Whipple

The Stakeholders planning group met on Wednesday, February 2, 2011, as the date for the next meeting, with Wednesday, February 9 as the snow date. A "Save a Date" email will be sent to stakeholders, followed by an invitation, and a subsequent email reminder.

The group decided to keep the same format as last year: the COA Chair will make opening remarks and discuss the purpose of the meeting; attendees will then, break into smaller groups, and come back to share their insights on various issues. The COA will highlight how the outcome of the May 2010 Stakeholders meeting has affected the COA's work and to encourage stakeholders to actively engage in the County public forums as the FY12 County Budget is announced.

The next planning meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 8th, at the Gaithersburg Upcounty Senior Center from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m, followed immediately by the “Aging in Place in the Community” Meeting.

Commission members discussed the possibility of hosting more frequent meetings with the Senior Stakeholders. The Communication and Outreach Committee will draft a communication message and outreach strategies for stakeholders’ meetings.

At its second meeting, the Aging in Place/Community Committee reviewed the role of the committee as well as the Summer Study on Transportation. According to Dr. Charles Smith, it costs about \$5,000 each year to maintain a car in this County. Ms. Shapiro has met with the owner of Regency Cab, who is considering a new program that would allow seniors to buy a card for taxi rides at \$4,700, thereby saving \$300 from the annual cost of maintaining a private car. The merits of this proposal were debated and the committee will discuss it further. Ms. Shapiro emphasized that it is not in the interest of the COA to determine pricing options for such a program, but rather, the COA’s role is to help foster innovative ideas such as this. It was noted that Easter Seals sponsors “Project Action: Forming Partnership with Transit,” This free, six-week virtual training course is designed for transit advocates interested in increasing their role in the design and implementation of transportation services in the community.

Health and Wellness – Tammy Duell and Judy Levy

Ruth Martin of the Community Health Improvement Process (CHIP) will speak at the next meeting. The focus of the last meeting was on educating professionals and seniors about health care reform. The group also reviewed the proposed form for Medical Order for Life Sustaining Treatment (MOLST). The committee is waiting to hear from the County Council staff about action on the proposed End of Life Bill of Rights.

Governor O’Malley has appointed a task force for the implementation of Health Care Reform. Their recommendations are expected in January 2011. A PowerPoint presentation from Sandy Markwood, Executive Director of the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging, and a video on health care reform will be shared with the COA.

Vital Living Committee – Patricia Lesnick

Ms. Lesnick reported on the Vital Living Committee’s (VLC) new resource directory, the ***Vital Living Navigator***. Dissemination of the directory will begin in January 2011. The VLC “Adopt a Library” project is now fully implemented. In the coming year the VLC will continue its support of the Senior Employment Expo to be held May 17 and will increase its focus on affordable senior housing.

Montgomery County Libraries- Linda Berg

Ms. Berg reported that libraries will be closed on Sundays due to budget restrictions.

Housing Opportunity Commission -Pazit Aviv

Ms. Aviv reported an increase in the number of requests to the Housing Opportunity Commission (HOC) for emergency financial assistance from seniors in crisis. She refers callers to the Crisis Center or to the Aging and Disability Resource Unit, depending on the circumstances. Several HOC facilities are under renovations with the installation of new fire alarms. GROWS is collecting donations of Holiday gifts for seniors. All are welcome to contribute.

Office of Community Partnerships -Austin Heyman

More than 150 people attended an “Aging in Place” event, organized by the Bethesda Chevy Chase Chamber of Commerce. A recent “Seniors Today” show featured Leslie Marks discussing senior housing issues.

Commission on People with Disabilities-John Miers

In 2011, the Commission will focus on transportation needs (beyond just Metro Access) and will coordinate with the COA.

Executive Committee-Elaine Binder

The Executive Committee has asked Leslie Marks to attend its December meeting to discuss her proposal on purpose-built affordable senior housing.

Committee and summer study chairs were asked to submit written summaries of the year’s activities, accomplishments, and plans by 12/31 to Marcia Pruzan, who is preparing the COA 2010 Annual Report.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30AM.

Respectfully submitted,
Marcia Pruzan,
Secretary